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DIRECTORATE OF
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[South Vietnam: Ground action picked up on 3-4 October largely as a result of allied operations.

South Vietnamese forces reported killing over 150 enemy troops in a sweep along the Cambodian border near the Thien Ngon Special Forces camp. The enemy units, estimated to be two battalions, may have been attempting to move into positions to attack the camp.

A skirmish developed outside the Thuong Duc Special Forces camp when a patrol from the camp was placed under fire while checking the results of a B-52 strike. Eighteen South Vietnamese irregulars and one US adviser were wounded in the fight. There were reportedly 32 enemy casualties.

South Vietnamese troops near Gio Linh came under a 200-round North Vietnamese artillery and mortar barrage on 3-4 October. Casualties were very light, although this was the heaviest artillery attack in the Demilitarized Zone area since the end of June.

* * * *

Since Tet, about half of the province and district chiefs in IV Corps have been replaced, and the net effect appears to be an improvement. The efforts of almost all the delta province and district chiefs, however, remain handicapped by their weak and inadequate staffs. The performance of village and hamlet governments, never satisfactory, has become even less efficient in recent months.

The nine new province chiefs are reportedly more aware of the political dimensions of their jobs than were their predecessors, and have been making efforts to establish rapport with the local people. In the past, however, new province chiefs have often started off well, only to prove ineffective in the long run.]

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[The security situation in the countryside has not yet been restored to pre-Tet conditions, and it appears that there are fewer viable village and hamlet administrations today than there were before Tet. Many villages and hamlets have governments which function in name only. Village and hamlet officials, except in very secure areas, do not sleep in their homes but move to a different location each night. This is reported to be the case even in some district towns. Since Tet, many local officials have been assassinated or abducted, while others have resigned or have ceased to function actively.]

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[USSR-Czechoslovakia: The communique issued at the conclusion of the summit talks yesterday indicates that Moscow forced further concessions from the Czechoslovaks.

Prague appears to have given ground on two main issues. The communique states that Prague "will reinforce the party and state organs with men firmly adhering to positions of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism." This indicates that the Czechoslovaks have agreed to accept conservative and pro-Soviet personalities into the leadership. The Czechoslovaks previously had ousted several leaders on the Soviet blacklist, but in every case had replaced them with other liberals. The communique suggests that this tactic will no longer be tolerated by Moscow.

The communique also says that the two sides will "consider and sign" a treaty on the "temporary" stationing of troops in Czechoslovakia. "Other troops"--presumably those not included in the semipermanent garrison force--will be withdrawn in "stages." There is no indication that the withdrawal of the remaining troops will be speeded by normalization measures. Despite the use of the word "temporary," the Soviets have made it clear that a Soviet garrison of unspecified size will remain indefinitely.

Moscow bluntly indicated its dissatisfaction with the pace and scope of Czechoslovak compliance with the Moscow agreement of August. The communique states that "special attention" was given to this question, and notes that the Czechoslovaks agreed to "take every measure" to fulfill the earlier agreement. This language will again be open to differing interpretations, but it seems probable that Moscow is now determined that Prague act in accordance with its wishes.]

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[The Soviet leaders also seem to have attained one of their other major goals--setting the stage for the removal of Dubcek. Dubcek's concessions in Moscow will erode his support both within his party and among the population. The communique appears certain to alienate President Svoboda and thus to destroy the unified leadership Dubcek had forged. As a consequence of these domestic reactions Dubcek's days as party chief are numbered. Slovak party secretary Husak, who accompanied Dubcek to Moscow, still appears to be the most likely figure to replace him.

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[redacted] the Soviets are demanding three Czechoslovak training areas as well as housing facilities to be vacated by 10 October. The training areas are located north-east of Prague and in central and eastern Czechoslovakia. [redacted]

the Soviets plan to leave a total of 100,000 men in Czechoslovakia and that the size of the Czechoslovak Army was to be reduced "due to the presence of the Soviet troops."

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Peru: The military government headed by General Juan Velasco appears to have firm control of the country and has thus far met little active opposition.

A planned general strike has so far failed to materialize. Leaders of APRA, the major opposition party, reportedly disagree over what form opposition to the present government should take. Those favoring resistance "by every available means" appear to be in the majority, but even this group does not consider armed resistance feasible. Its members plan to call as many strikes as possible and encourage demonstrations by workers and students.

Army troops and police have dealt firmly with the unorganized student disorders, in which three university students were reportedly killed and many injured. [redacted]

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General Velasco was sworn in as president in a televised ceremony on the evening of 3 October. His 13-member cabinet is composed entirely of military officers, who are generally described as competent, strongly anti-Communist, and favoring good relations with the US. Public statements of the new government indicate that the armed forces intend to maintain power indefinitely.

Members of the Organization of American States have begun to consult about recognizing the new government. Venezuela's foreign minister has stated that his country will follow its tradition of non-recognition of governments that come to power through unconstitutional means.

In other reaction, the Chilean Communists have accused the US of responsibility for the Peruvian coup. As many as 2,000 students, accompanied by Socialist and Communist legislators, broke windows at the US Consulate in Santiago before police broke up the demonstration. [redacted]

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Brazil: The hard-pressed Costa e Silva government is facing new problems that involve the military, students, workers, and the church.

The Brazilian Air Force is apparently in the throes of a crisis caused by the attempts of right-wing officers to use an elite parachute unit to eliminate opposition student and political leaders. A shake-up in the air force leadership is likely if the allegations prove true or are even widely accepted.

Army minister General Lyra Tavares has confided his unease over the "national situation" [redacted]

[redacted] The general is upset by the implications of the air force crisis and by the activities of a group around the President. Lyra claims these people "shield" Costa e Silva from "unpleasant truths." The general also believes that many officers deeply resent recent speeches by left-wing federal deputies who have bitterly attacked the military. He reportedly has urged the President to suspend the political rights of at least one of the offenders--a move that would be of questionable constitutionality.

On the civilian front, the government is also faced with renewed student disorders and with illegal strikes by bank and metal workers in Belo Horizonte. The moderate cardinal of Sao Paulo has refused to accept a decoration from the President--a gesture which is a personal rebuff to Costa e Silva and makes clear the church's reluctance to endorse the government publicly.

So far, at least, Costa e Silva has shown little of the kind of leadership that seems needed to master such problems. [redacted]

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Venezuela: President Leoni is reported to have ordered a halt to the arrest of subversives.

With less than two months before general elections, Leoni probably believes that curbing the actions of the national police and continuing the amnesty of political prisoners and former guerrillas will gain votes for his party's presidential candidate.

Leoni's order is not likely to improve his relationship with either the minister of interior or military leaders, who believe their efforts to curb insurgency are thwarted by the Leoni government's politically expedient actions.

On 30 August the defense minister, General Gomez, told the press that regardless of government policy, 95 political prisoners, including some guilty of armed attacks and murders, would not be released. Although Gomez later "clarified" his remarks, his statement stands as a warning to politicians that the armed forces are following political developments closely and that they are ready to speak out on any political decision that might infringe on their primary interests.

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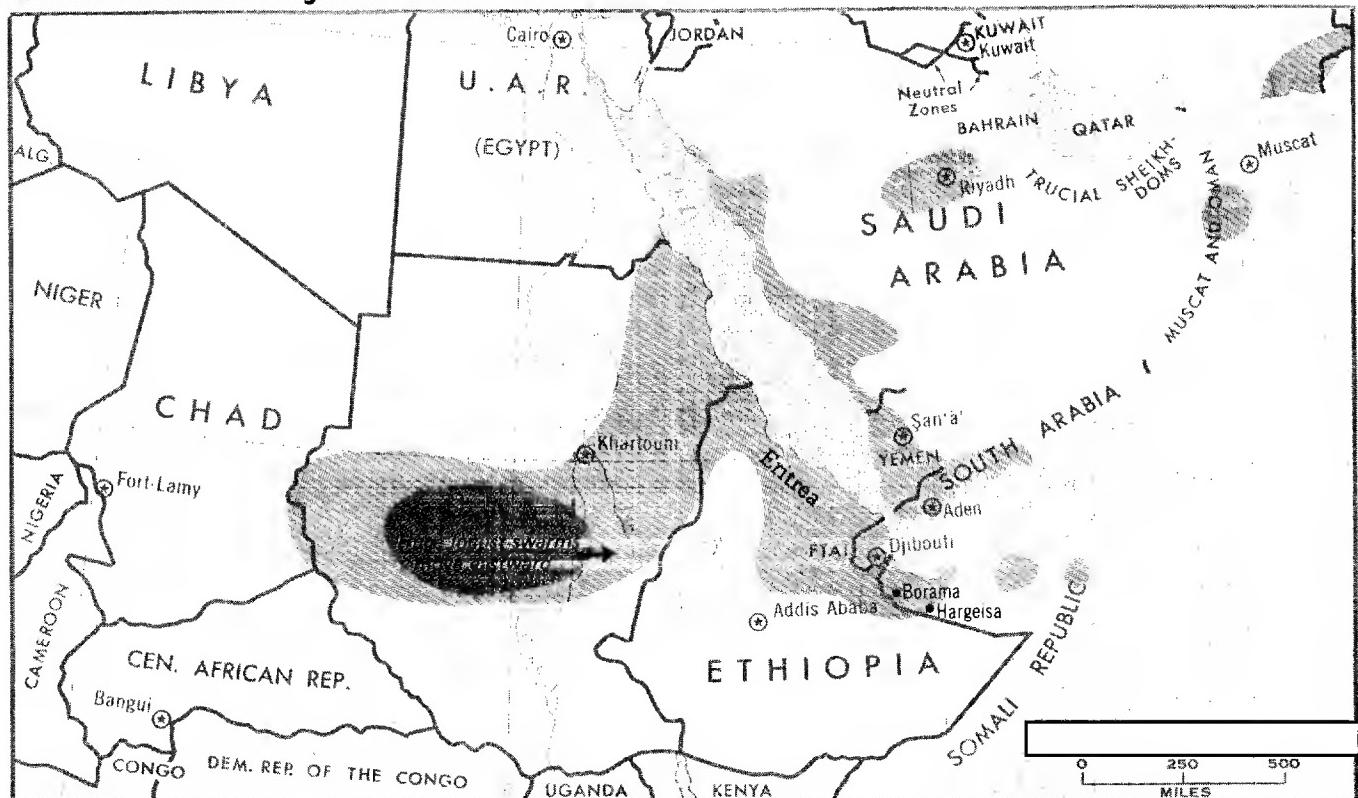
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East African Locust Plague Enters Critical Phase



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Area of locust infestation

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Desert locusts swarming over airport
at Hargeisa, Somali Republic
August 1960

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East Africa: The locust plague which has been menacing East Africa since last fall will enter a critical phase in the next ten days.

Twenty separate locust swarms, ranging in size from 44 to 300 square miles, have been reported moving eastward 30 to 40 miles per day across the Sudan. At this rate, they will reach the foot of the Ethiopian highlands within a week. A large area of Ethiopia is already infested, and the expected arrival of additional hordes from the Sudan, where efforts to eliminate them have been ineffective, could cause serious damage to the Ethiopian harvest. The Ethiopian Government has not yet recognized the gravity of the situation, which could result in a major food shortage within six months if the locusts are not controlled.

The Desert Locust Control Organization of East Africa, which is directing the antilocust campaign in Ethiopia, will probably be unable to cope with the increased threat with its present resources. The organization has been spraying dense locust swarms in Eritrea and in an area from Hargeisa to Borama in the Somali Republic. Five of its nine aircraft, however, are currently under repair and the four operational planes are badly in need of maintenance after a year of continuous spraying operations.

If the locusts are not controlled in Ethiopia and Somalia, they will probably move south into Kenya, threatening that country's crops as well. The Kenyan Government has already begun equipping three air force planes with spraying gear in anticipation of an invasion.

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Iran: The Iranian Government is making vigorous efforts to halt dissident activities in Iranian Kurdistan.

Border raids from Iraq and clashes along the border between Iranian gendarmerie forces and insurgent Iraqi and Iranian Kurds have increased during the past few months. During August, Iranian gendarmerie and military units were reinforced,

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[redacted] More recently, the Shah sent Lt. General Oveisi, chief of the gendarmerie, to the area to handle the problem. Under Oveisi's orders, authorities arrested more than 200 Iranian Kurds suspected of dissidence and executed a number of captured bandits.

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The border disturbances are believed to be sponsored by Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani, using members of his own group of Kurds from Iraq and dissatisfied Kurds recruited from within Iran.

Talabani has cooperated with the Iraqi Government in the past, and his current activities in Iran probably receive support from Baghdad. His archrival, the rebel Iraqi Kurdish leader Mullah Mustafa Barzani, has received substantial Iranian aid in his fight against the Iraqi Government. It would not be surprising if the Iraqis decided to retaliate by causing trouble in Iran's Kurdish area.

Talabani's Kurds appear to present no real threat to Iranian authority in Kurdistan, although it will be difficult to eliminate border raids entirely. Indiscriminate arrests and executions, however, could produce far more dissident sentiment within Iranian Kurdistan than presently exists.

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NATO: After three days of special consultations, the NATO allies have agreed on the need for greater solidarity. The 14 members of the defense planning committee also appear to have agreed in principle on new efforts to strengthen the Alliance. At least five member governments have pledged modest improvements in their defense efforts. A summary assessment has been drawn up for North Atlantic Council consideration which, together with other recommendations, could provide the basis for increased defense efforts by the European allies. [redacted]

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USSR - Southern Yemen: A ten-man Soviet military mission arrived in Aden on 29 September to study Southern Yemen's military requirements and to service Soviet equipment. A visit of a Soviet military group to Southern Yemen in March was followed by the delivery of vehicles, small arms, and ammunition in July. A similar delivery--under an arms agreement signed in August--will probably follow the current visit, with the Soviets continuing to fend off requests for economic aid. [redacted]

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Nigeria: The French-facilitated airlift of weapons to Biafra is continuing to grow. The US defense attaché in Ivory Coast has observed a number of planes bearing arms probably destined for Biafra. Among these are French Air Force transports, one of which offloaded military materiel, and several other planes that reportedly left Abidjan with military cargoes. A ten-plane shuttle under French supervision now is making seven or eight flights a night into Biafra from Gabon carrying French-made arms and relief supplies. [redacted]

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Bolivia: The all-military cabinet has resigned, probably to avoid being questioned by congress next week about the government's involvement in the transmission of Che Guevara's diary to Cuba. When the cabinet was appointed at the end of July, President Barrientos stated that it probably would be in office no more than 90 days. The next cabinet will probably be made up predominantly of civilians.

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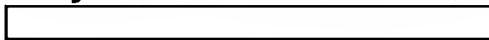
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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

The United States Intelligence Board on
4 October 1968 approved the following national
intelligence estimate:

NIE 10-68, "Communist Military Assistance
Programs in Less Developed Areas"



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